

MDR Tracking Number: M5-04-1200-01

Under the provisions of Section 413.031 of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Title 5, Subtitle A of the Texas Labor Code, effective June 17, 2001 and Commission Rule 133.305 titled Medical Dispute Resolution - General and 133.308 titled Medical Dispute Resolution by Independent Review Organizations, the Medical Review Division assigned an IRO to conduct a review of the disputed medical necessity issues between the requestor and the respondent. The dispute was received on 12-23-03.

The Medical Review Division has reviewed the IRO decision and determined that **the requestor prevailed** on the issues of medical necessity. Therefore, upon receipt of this Order and in accordance with §133.308(r)(9), the Commission hereby orders the respondent and non-prevailing party to **refund the requestor \$460** for the paid IRO fee. For the purposes of determining compliance with the order, the Commission will add 20 days to the date the order was deemed received as outlined on page one of this order.

In accordance with §413.031(e), it is a defense for the carrier if the carrier timely complies with the IRO decision.

Based on review of the disputed issues within the request, the Medical Review Division has determined that **medical necessity was the only issue** to be resolved. The physical performance test and work hardening (initial and additional hours) from 4/11/03 to 5/5/03 were found to be medically necessary. The respondent raised no other reasons for denying reimbursement for the above listed service.

This Findings and Decision is hereby issued this 20th day of April 2004.

Regina L. Cleave
Medical Dispute Resolution Officer
Medical Review Division

On this basis, and pursuant to §§402.042, 413.016, 413.031, and 413.019 of the Act, the Medical Review Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to pay the unpaid medical fees in accordance with the fair and reasonable rate as set forth in Commission Rule 133.1(a)(8) plus all accrued interest due at the time of payment to the requestor within 20 days of receipt of this order. This Order is applicable to dates of service 4/11/03 to 5/5/03 in this dispute.

The respondent is prohibited from asserting additional denial reasons relative to this Decision upon issuing payment to the requestor in accordance with this Order (Rule 133.307(j)(2)).

This Order is hereby issued this 20th day of April 2004.

Roy Lewis, Supervisor
Medical Dispute Resolution
Medical Review Division
RL/r/c

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

Amended Letter
Note: Decision

March 17, 2004

MDR Tracking #: M5-04-1200-01
IRO Certificate #: IRO4326

The ____ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). The Texas Workers' Compensation Commission (TWCC) has assigned the above referenced case to ____ for independent review in accordance with TWCC Rule §133.308 which allows for medical dispute resolution by an IRO.

____ has performed an independent review of the rendered care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. In performing this review, relevant medical records, any documents utilized by the parties referenced above in making the adverse determination, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the appeal was reviewed.

The independent review was performed by a matched peer with the treating health care professional. This case was reviewed by a health care professional licensed in chiropractic care. ____'s health care professional has signed a certification statement stating that no known conflicts of interest exist between him or her and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for a determination prior to the referral to ____ for independent review. In addition, the reviewer has certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party to this case.

Clinical History

This patient sustained a repetitive injury on ____ due to typing and computer work. She was diagnosed with left carpal tunnel syndrome, saw a chiropractor for treatment and therapy, and eventually was referred to an orthopedic surgeon who performed a carpal tunnel release on 12/11/02. She began a work hardening program on 03/31/03.

Requested Service(s)

Physical performance test and work hardening, initial and additional hours, from 04/11/03 through 05/05/03

Decision

It is determined that the physical performance test and work hardening, initial and additional hours, from 04/11/03 through 05/05/03 was medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The records and diagnosis submitted adequately established the medical necessity for post surgical rehabilitation, as well as the fact that the patient was a good candidate for a work hardening program. The pre and post work hardening functional capacity evaluations (FCEs) objectively demonstrated an improvement in her work abilities, and the medical records sufficiently established that the psychological requirements for referral to this kind of program had been met. More significantly, however, was the fact that this particular patient has a congenital deformity of her right upper extremity that requires her to be able to type seven hours per day with only her left hand. This added demand necessitated that a work hardening program be performed, versus other lesser forms of rehabilitation and strengthening, in order to properly rehabilitate this patient. Therefore, it is determined that the physical performance test and work hardening, initial and additional hours, from 04/11/03 through 05/05/03 was medically necessary.

Sincerely,